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WEEKLY REPORT



THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

22 December 1965

INTELLIGENCE AND REPORTING SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE INTERAGENCY
VIETNAM COORDINATING COMMITTEE
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THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

(16 December - 22 December 1965)

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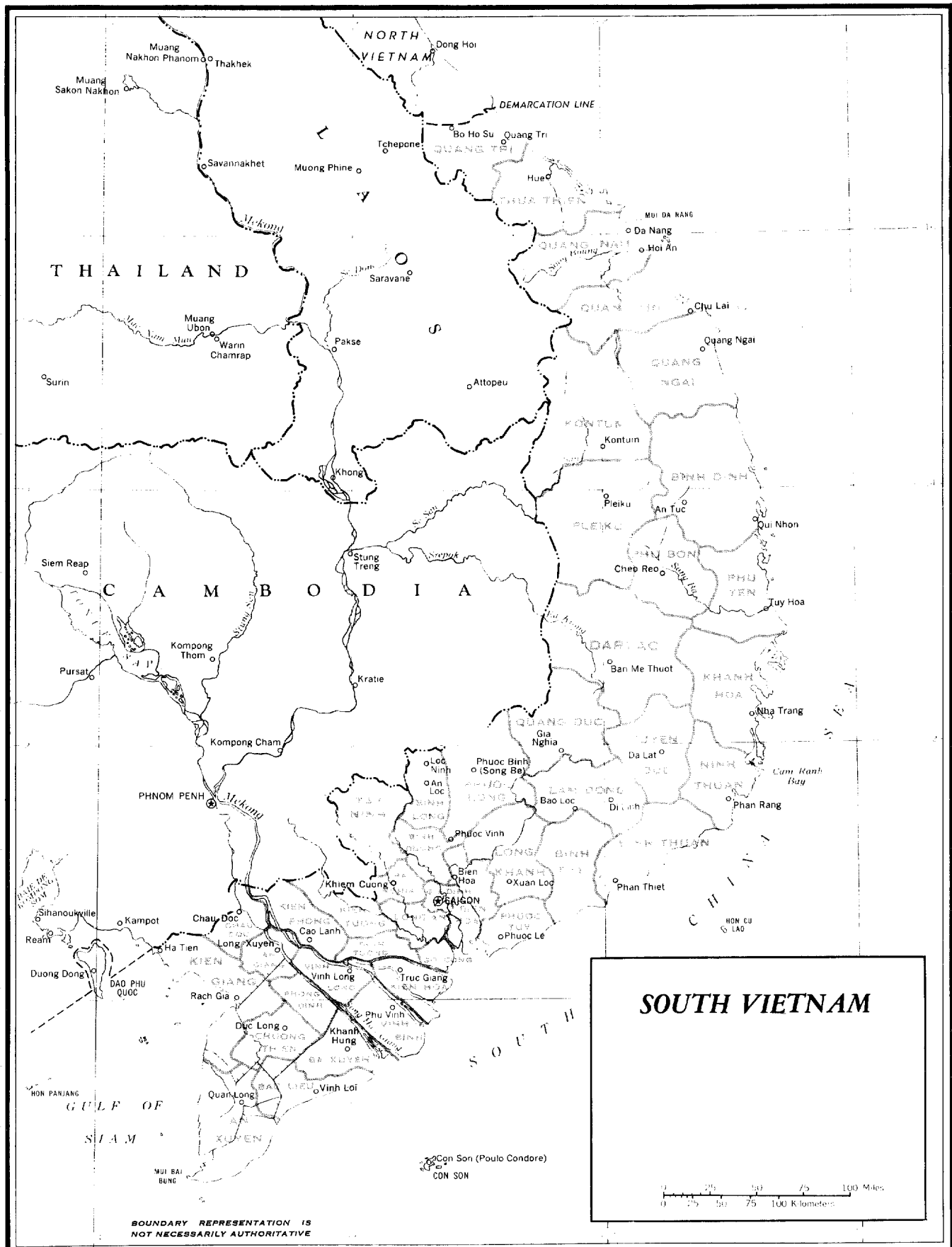
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(The Weekly Report on the Situation in South Vietnam is based on contributions from CIA, DIA, and INR; it is edited and published by CIA without final coordination.)

THE WEEK IN PERSPECTIVE

Fighting was less heavy last week than in the preceding weeks. US casualty statistics reflected the relative lull, with ten Americans killed during the seven days as compared to 99 the week before. The incident rate was still high, however, particularly in Saigon where Viet Cong terrorism has increased.

A tribal uprising late last week, although quickly suppressed, points up the fragility of the South Vietnamese hold on the loyalties of ethnic minorities in the central highlands, and may foreshadow increased government resistance to tribal aspirations.



I. THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

A. POLITICAL SITUATION

1. A tribal uprising late last week, although quickly suppressed, points up the fragility of the South Vietnamese hold on the loyalties of ethnic minorities in the central highlands, and may foreshadow increased government resistance to tribal aspirations.

2. The revolt, staged by the dissident tribal autonomy movement, FULRO, erupted in four provinces of the central highlands on 18 December. The government was tipped off to possible trouble from FULRO just before the revolt when, on 16 and 17 December, it arrested some 25 to 30 adherents of the movement who were attempting to stir up fellow tribesmen in Pleiku town. According to these prisoners, a FULRO plan called for the seizure of five provincial capitals in the highlands.

3. In spite of an alert in several government paramilitary camps, two companies of armed FULRO troops--believed to have come across the border from Cambodia where the movement is reportedly headquartered--entered Gia Nghia, the capital of Quang Duc Province, on 18 December and held the town's administrative offices for about five hours until government reinforcements arrived. This group surrendered peacefully to government regulars. Almost simultaneously, a Montagnard regional force company in Phu Bon Province revolted and seized the district town of Phu Thien. Before the town was recaptured by government regulars, 32 persons including the district chief were killed, and 22 others wounded. The insurgents fled, but about 82 members of the rebel company have since surrendered. Three government special forces camps were also subjected to internal revolt: Plei Mrong and Plei Djereng in northwestern Pleiku Province, and Lac Thien in Darlac Province. Government control was apparently reasserted over all of the sites by 19 December.

4. The problem of dissidence by FULRO--an abbreviation for the "United Front of the Struggle

for the Oppressed Races"--has been simmering since September 1964, when a similar revolt occurred among tribesmen in four government special forces camps in Darlac and northern Quang Duc provinces. Although that uprising was quieted by negotiations, several of the troops involved deserted--under the leadership of Rhade tribesman Y-Bham Enoul--and have since sought foreign support for Montagnard autonomy. They have also attempted to recruit followers from among the various tribal villages and government paramilitary units.

5. Following the 1964 revolt, then premier Khanh laid down a program of assistance to the tribes in an effort to satisfy some of their long-standing grievances against ethnic Vietnamese rule. More recently, during the latter part of 1965, the Ky government has engaged in negotiations with representatives of FULRO to try to effect the return of FULRO's 700-1500 armed troops. However, government stalling in the implementation of Khanh's program as well as in the more recent negotiations, together with increased disruption in tribal areas as the war intensifies in the highlands, has tended to increase disillusionment among the tribes regarding the government's sincerity and effectiveness.

6. There are indications that the reaction of government officials is one of increased suspicion of FULRO treachery and of determination to punish the instigators. [REDACTED] has reported that military tribunals are being established in II Corps, and that any tribal leaders found guilty will be publicly executed. II Corps commander General Vinh Loc has long been an advocate of a hard line toward tribal dissidence. Evidence that FULRO support has spread from the Rhade tribe to the Jarai tribe has also demonstrated the potential appeal of FULRO throughout the highlands, including Montagnards serving in government special forces camps.

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7. The US Embassy has speculated that the motive behind the latest FULRO uprising may have been the belief that the government would be forced to face up to the need for concessions. There are also reports, however, that within FULRO a group exists which is dissatisfied with the results so

far obtained by Y-Bham, and which may have sought deliberately to provoke an adverse government reaction and final break. Although there is no strong evidence to date of any collusion between FULRO and the Viet Cong, the present unrest and the prospect of an increasingly unsympathetic government approach toward the Montagnards offer obvious opportunities for Viet Cong exploitation.

8. According to the US Embassy, last week's conference of the Unified Buddhist Association, had two striking aspects. One was the apparent increase in the influence of Tri Quang as a result of amendments to the association's charter. One amendment places the secular branch under the partial supervision of a new "synod" associated with the clerical branch headed by Quang. The other noteworthy aspect was the apparent lack of unity among the Buddhists, centering particularly about regional loyalties.

9. Propaganda disseminated during the week by the Viet Cong Liberation radio continued to focus on the Front's fifth anniversary on 20 December, and on the Front's accomplishments in extending its control and "destroying" allied units. Almost no further mention was made of an earlier Front appeal for 15 minutes of silence on 19 December--approximately at siesta time on a Sunday--to honor the Front anniversary. Moreover, the appeal was completely ignored in Saigon and other major towns. The Front has repeated on a number of occasions its offer of a 12-hour Christmas Eve ceasefire to permit allied troops who are Catholics to attend services provided they are unarmed; however, this offer also continues to receive relatively low-keyed propaganda play.

Economic Situation

10. The GVN cabinet has adopted a 55-billion-piaster ceiling for the 1966 budget, only slightly above the 52-billion-piaster budget for 1965. The US Mission has been emphasizing to the GVN the importance of holding the budget under 60 billion piasters, and views the 55-billion-piaster ceiling as salutary from an economic standpoint, though an

assessment of the effect of the budget ceiling on GVN military force goals and civil programs must await a detailed budget presentation. Military expenditures are held to 35 billion piasters, which entails reduction in certain projected force increases. On the civil side, about 19 billion piasters will be available for actual programs as against 21.6 billion piasters in 1965. Under the ceiling, the police force will be held at the present 50,000-man level rather than being increased to 72,000 as originally proposed. In line with the austerity program, Premier Ky has not permitted the GVN to proceed with its import program, although the GVN had foreign exchange reserves of US \$144.4 million as of 30 September. The US Mission has told the GVN that the US will expect the GVN to utilize US \$75 million of its own foreign exchange for imports during the last quarter of 1965 and the first quarter of 1966.

11. Wholesale rice prices (No. 1/25 percent broken) rose above VN \$700/100 kg for the first time in two months, reaching levels of VN \$720-727 during the first half of December. The rise may be due either to reduced rice stocks in Saigon (down to about 20,000 metric tons - MT) or possibly to the higher prices at which imported Thai rice is being sold in Saigon (VN \$830/100 kg). Prices may decline again with increased deliveries from the delta. Under the GVN rice purchasing policy for 1966, the GVN will buy paddy at a price of VN \$700 for 100 kg milled white rice equivalent. There is a surplus of red rice that the government does not intend to buy, and rice storage space in Saigon is short due to preemption of existing warehouses for other purposes.

12. Retail prices in Saigon remained stable with the exception of beef, pork, and chicken, which rose in response to reduced pork deliveries after price ceilings on pork were imposed by the GVN. Prices of construction materials continued to rise, with cement prices now 122 percent above levels one month ago, and round steel bars up by 33 percent. US military services have now begun trying to avoid competition with each other that had resulted in bidding prices up.

13. Currency and gold prices in Saigon continued to rise, reaching VN \$171 and VN \$129 per US dollar and MPCs (scrip), respectively. The Hong Kong rate for dollars also rose to 158 piasters.

B. MILITARY SITUATION

1. Combat activity was at a relatively low level throughout the week, as Communist forces generally avoided contact and the number of government and allied operations declined. Although there was an over-all numerical decrease of Viet Cong incidents, their intensity increased and there was a significant rise of terrorist activity in the Saigon area. Only two of the 11 attacks mounted by Viet Cong/PAVN elements were of battalion or larger size.

2. During the period 12 to 18 December, 866 Viet Cong incidents occurred, a 12.5 percent decline from last week's 975. This week's kill ratio favored the government 4.3 to 1, an improvement over last week's 3.4 to 1. Viet Cong casualties included 1,028 killed and 131 captured, generally comparable to last week's 976 and 106. The government lost 359 killed, 555 wounded, and 257 missing or captured, as against 196, 454, and 193 the previous week. US casualties dropped to 10 killed, 126 wounded, and 6 captured from last week's 99, 392, and 7. One Australian and two Korean soldiers were killed, while one Australian and two Koreans were wounded. The weapons-loss ratio again favored the Viet Cong.

GVN/Allied Activities

3. The situation remained generally quiet in allied forces' areas throughout the week with the only major actions taking place in I and IV Corps tactical zones (CTZs). Of 69 battalion or larger sized friendly operations, 31 resulted in contact, whereas last week's 82 had achieved 47 contacts. A total of 22,055 small-unit operations, including 2,322 US, resulted in 145 contacts with 69 of these by US troops. In addition to its other troubles, the government was required again to face tribal dissidence in the II CTZ highlands, when the FULRO organization attempted unsuccessfully to stage an uprising.

4. In I CTZ, LIEN KIET 18 - HARVEST MOON, the combined ARVN-USMC operation in Quang Tin Province, achieved sporadic contacts and terminated on 20

December. While ARVN units searched last week's battle scene, three US Marine battalions swept B-52 strike areas and attempted to block Viet Cong westward moves. Numerous caves and tunnel complexes were discovered, containing abandoned uniforms, sewing machines, cloth, paper, fuel oil, bicycles, and weapons. Five PAVN captives from the operation have indicated the presence of a 195th AAA battalion. Latest Viet Cong - PAVN casualty figures are 419 killed and 53 captured; allied forces have lost 158 killed (50 US), 326 wounded (195 US), and 181 missing (2 US).

5. The other major friendly action of the week occurred in Vinh Binh Province of IV CTZ, where the 9th Division (ARVN) employed seven battalions and two river-assault groups to force an estimated Viet Cong battalion into a pocket. Effective artillery and air strike support inflicted heavy casualties. The Viet Cong lost 154 killed and 13 captured while friendly losses were 16 killed and 46 wounded.

6. NEW LIFE 65, the 24-day combined operation in Long Khanh and Binh Tuy provinces to protect the relocating of civilians and the harvesting of crops, terminated during the week. A total of 13,736 civilians were moved to new areas and 1,244 tons of paddy were harvested. The Viet Cong lost 22 killed and 25 captured, while 207 rallied to the government. Friendly losses were three killed (two US and one Australian) and 32 wounded (nine US and two Australians).

7. Sea, river, and coastal forces searched 3,655 junks and 15,078 persons, a marked increase over last week's 3,490 and 13,717. None of 50 detainees were confirmed as Viet Cong. A noteworthy bonus from MARKET TIME (surveillance) operations has been the apprehension of draft-dodgers and deserters. The stringent enforcement of curfew and "no junk" areas is expected to be of considerable benefit, although progress is now reported as slow.

8. Twelve B-52 Stratofortress raids were flown during the week against target areas in Quang Tin, Pleiku, Binh Duong, and Bien Hoa provinces, bringing the total of such missions to 123.

Communist Activities

9. Viet Cong and PAVN forces developed no major engagements, as contact generally was avoided in favor of terrorism, harassment, and probing actions. Enemy units apparently are regrouping and preparing for renewed efforts. The Saigon-Cholon area has been the scene of current emphasis on terrorism against Americans and Vietnamese police. The total of terrorist incidents for the week of 12 to 18 December rose to 33 from 26 the previous week, and the rate has continued high. Elsewhere, terrorism as usual accounted for more than 60 percent of all incidents.

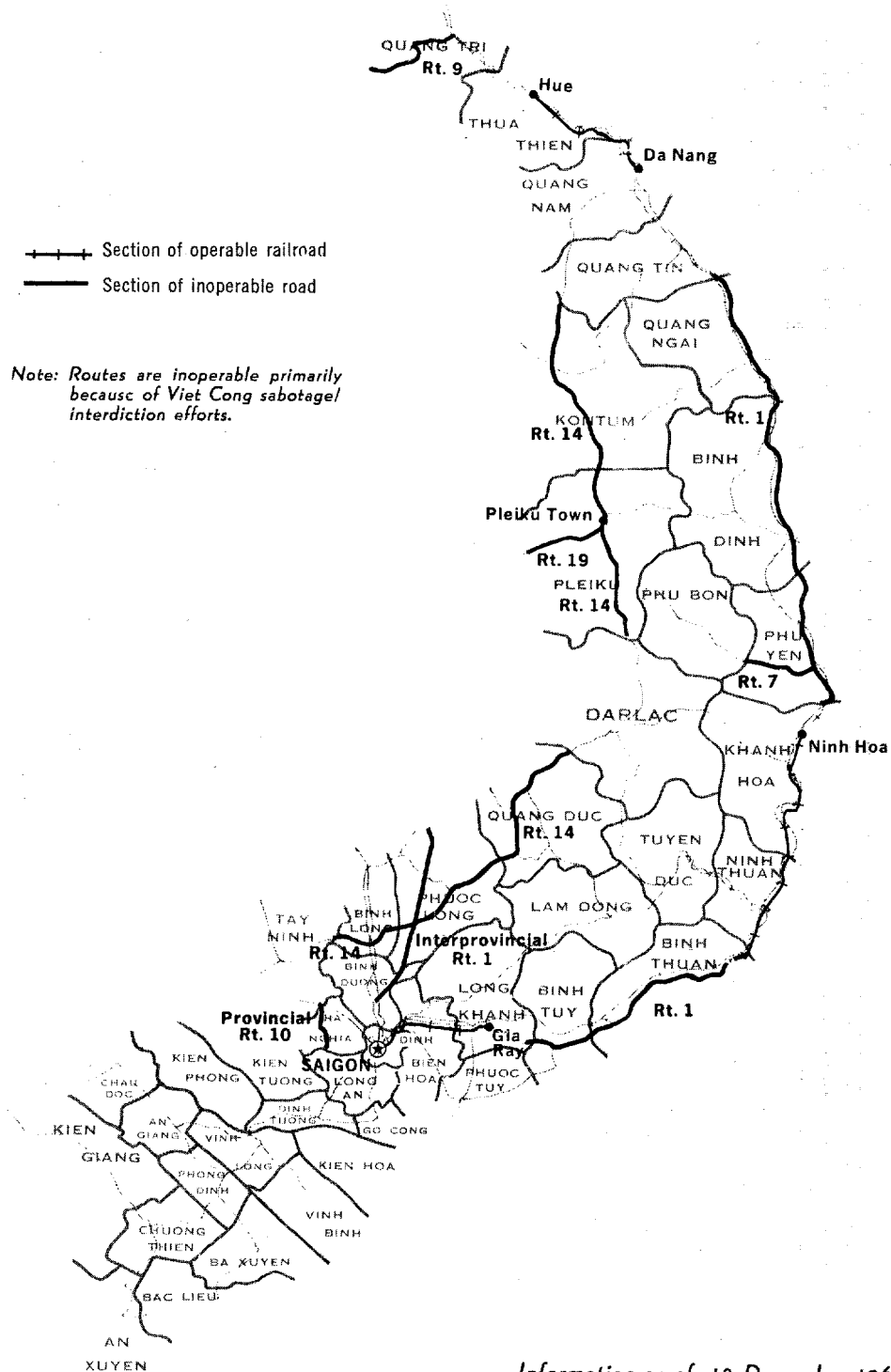
10. In I CTZ there were two attacks, one of small scale in Quang Tin Province on 12 December, and a battalion-size attack on the My Trang outpost in southeast Quang Ngai Province on 15 December. The majority of Viet Cong incidents in I CTZ continued to consist of harassing fire directed against US Marines in the vicinity of Da Nang and Chu Lai.

11. Only one Viet Cong attack was reported in the II Corps area during the week. On 14 December, an unknown number of Viet Cong attacked a company of the 41st Regiment (ARVN) five kilometers northwest of Tuy Hoa in Phu Yen Province. For the seventh consecutive week, the II CTZ incident total (110) was low, with only about 12.5 percent of all terrorism in the country occurring there.

12. In III CTZ, there were seven small-scale attacks during the week. A strong Viet Cong thrust came on 16 December when a unit of unknown size ambushed two ARVN companies on a road-clearing operation in Hau Nghia Province. ARVN casualties were 50 killed, 21 wounded, and 18 missing; 87 weapons were lost.

13. On 14 December, a Viet Cong unit attacked a police station on the edge of Cholon, scattering the defenders and seizing 19 weapons. Several Americans and Vietnamese have been injured in a wave of grenade attacks; in an effort to reduce American vulnerability, a dusk-to-dawn curfew began on 19 December.

CURRENT OPERATIONAL STATUS OF MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND COASTAL RAILROAD



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14. Two small-scale attacks on government outposts in IV CTZ were reported, and the number and intensity of incidents decreased.

15. National Route 1 is closed in Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Binh Thuan, and Binh Tuy provinces. In Quang Tri Province, Route 9 is closed. Route 14 is closed in Kontum, Pleiku, Quang Duc, Phuoc Long, and Binh Long provinces. Route 19 is closed west of Pleiku town, and Route 7 is closed in Phu Yen Province. Provincial Route 10 is closed in Hau Nghai Province, as is Interprovincial Route 1 in Binh Long and Binh Duong provinces. The national railroad is closed between Gia Ray, Long Khanh Province, and the Binh Thuan - Ninh Thuan province border; between Ninh Hoa, Khanh Hoa Province, and Da Nang, Quang Nam Province; and from Hué, Thua Thien Province north to the demilitarized zone.

C. RURAL CONSTRUCTION

1. Official GVN statistics indicate that 499 Chieu Hoi ralliers returned to government control during the past week, a decline from the previous week's total of 562. The sharpest drop was reflected in the number of military returnees--214 this week in contrast to last week's 376. However, the number of Communist political cadres and civilian refugee ralliers increased to 101 and 182, respectively, against last week's respective totals of 55 and 129. No change was noted in the continued low level of draft dodger/deserter returnees: only two for the second consecutive reporting period.

2. As of 12 December, the number of Vietnamese refugees totaled 748,858, of whom 463,033 were located in temporary shelters.

3. The National Institute of Administration (NIA), in conjunction with the ministries of Rural Construction, Interior, and Justice, will provide a special training program to 40 district chiefs in late December. The 70-hour program will include 20 hours on pacification and rural construction, 20 on administrative techniques, 16 on special problems, and 14 on justice, courts, and boards work. In addition, Premier Ky, acting at the request of the Ministry of Interior, has ordered another 100 percent increase in trainees for NIA's regular program to develop field administrators for local governments. This will begin with the next school year.

4. The status of rural security in central coastal Binh Dinh Province was the subject of a recent memorandum by a returning USOM provincial reporter. Rural security in Binh Dinh began to collapse in late 1964 and during the first half of 1965 the province administratively dissolved--in effect, abandoned--three of its eleven districts, losing control of virtually all the countryside. In February and March, considerable fear prevailed that the capital of Qui Nhon might be attacked. The situation became somewhat less critical when the first US Marine elements landed in early July, followed by elements of the US 101st Airborne Division, the 1st Air Cavalry Division, and most of the ROK Tiger Division.

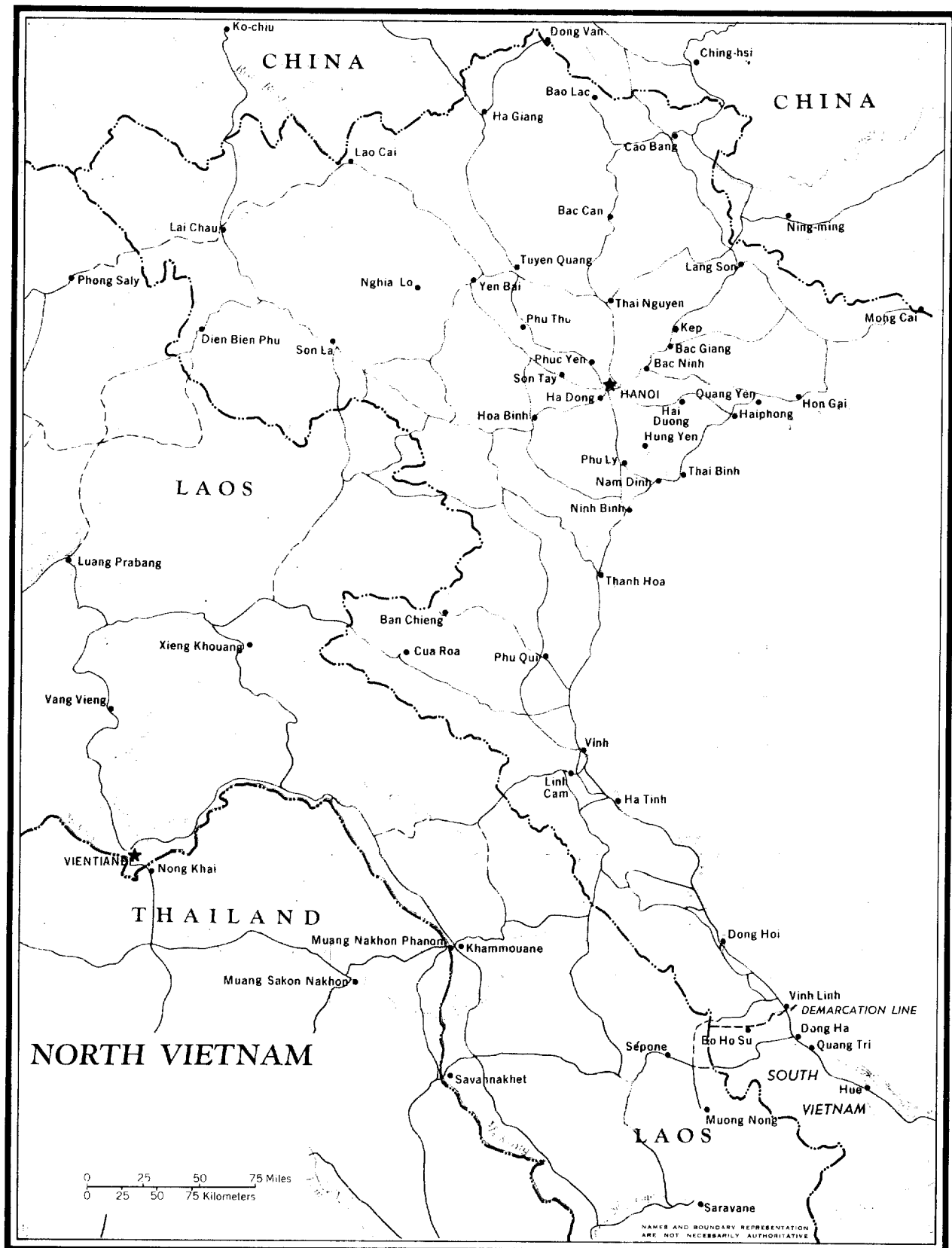
5. Between August and November 1965, there were a number of improvements in security in the southern part of Binh Dinh. More than 80 kilometers of strategic lateral Route 19 from Qui Nhon toward An Khe is a safe daytime drive for a single vehicle, as is coastal Route 1 for some 30 kilometers north of the provincial capital. Elements of the ROK Division presently patrol within a Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) that includes Binh Khe, An Nhon, and Tuy Phuoc districts, and appear to have kept sizable Viet Cong units out of a large portion of the province's southern lowlands. A number of refugees have been able to return to rural areas: about 7,000 to Tuy Phuoc, 6,000 to An Nhon, and 4,000 to Binh Khe. In addition, a significant portion of the main valley of sparsely populated Vinh Thanh district in the center of the province has been cleared with the aid of US 1st Cavalry Division elements, and the Vietnamese CIDG paramilitary camp there has been strengthened in anticipation of the reintroduction of district administration.

6. The southern lowlands of the province remain a difficult area, however. The Korean TAOR is enormous, comparable in size to Gia Dinh Province, and has a high population density, so that a division is easily absorbed in it. Guerrilla presence remains, and units from Binh Dinh's estimated 12,000-plus Viet Cong regular force are nearby, in a position to attack a number of villages within the TAOR. The situation is further complicated by two other factors, the weakness of local government, and the many changes in GVN - Viet Cong ascendancy that the area has experienced.

7. In the three northern coastal districts--Hoai Nhon, Phu My, and Phu Cat, together containing some 360,000 inhabitants--Communist control includes ascendancy over most of Hoai Nhon outside the chief town of Bong Son, and administrative presence in nine of Phu Cat's 11 villages with partial control over more than half its population. Although inland Hoai Nhon district is in precarious condition, the large An Tuc district, which forms the western boundary of the province, is secure in the environs of An Khe and the remainder is virtually unpopulated plateau.

8. Binh Dinh has been named a priority pacification province by Premier Ky, and plans have been developed for pacifying parts of the three districts within the Korean TAOR (Tuy Phuoc, An Nhon, and Binh Khe), with emphasis on Tuy Phuoc. The pacification plan is built around the political action team (PAT), an armed and politically-oriented 40-man platoon trained and backstopped by a US program. Each PAT will be assisted by a civil affairs and psyops group, for a total pacification team of some 60 persons. In the hamlet where it operates, the team will carry out civil action and propaganda, census grievance surveys with an intelligence goal, efforts to strengthen local government, and training and motivating of the population and of a self-defense force of local residents. Conceptually speaking, the aims of the team are no different from those of cadre under the old Strategic Hamlet program. However, in resources and approach there are significant differences: the PAT-centered team is larger and better trained than most other government hamlet cadres; the time that a team is to spend in each hamlet is planned at about three months, in contrast to two or three weeks in most other provinces; and the target area, although large, represents only a fraction of the province, with the rest not required to undergo what at present could only be an exercise.

9. US advisers in Binh Dinh estimate that about three quarters of the province's ricefields are subject to Viet Cong control and expropriation. In portions of Tuy Phuoc, An Nhon, and Binh Khe, several "hamlet protection" operations were underway in November with the support of allied troops. There are provincial plans for establishing storage points in various districts to store paddy, which would be bought on the spot from farmers during harvest. These plans are still nascent, although portions (e.g., funds request for paddy purchases) have been sent to Saigon for approval.



II. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BLOC

A. MILITARY

1. US aircraft conducted several major strikes during the past week. On 20 December six US Navy A-6 Intruders struck the Uong Bi thermal power plant some 14 miles north of Haiphong for the second time. The A-6 all-weather fighter-bomber aircraft were used because the strike was conducted at night in poor weather. Preliminary analysis of the bomb-damage photography of this strike revealed no apparent damage to the plant. Also during the past week, a number of major bridges in the area north and east of Haiphong were struck with results varying from one knocked down to minor damage inflicted on several others.

2. Seven US aircraft were lost during these strikes, including one to a surface-to-air missile. This was the ninth US plane shot down by a SAM.

B. POLITICAL

1. The Liberation Front's fifth anniversary on 20 December occupied the center of the propaganda stage in both North Vietnam and China. The celebration of the anniversary were replete with expressions of confidence in eventual military victory and cautious pretensions that the Front represents a de facto government. This was the main theme of a lengthy communiqué by the Front's news agency, broadcast by Hanoi on the 19th. The communiqué declared that the NFLSV was "in practice, now assuming the functions of a strong, stable, really democratic state of the people" in South Vietnam. In the "international arena," said the communiqué, the Front exerts a "broad influence and a great prestige." The objective of this propaganda line seems to be to build up as strong an image of NFLSV authority as possible for foreign audiences, while carefully avoiding any flat claims to de jure governmental status on the part of the Front.

2. Peking's treatment of the anniversary reflected concern over the possibility that Hanoi's resolve may falter under stepped up US military pressure.

Chinese public statements of encouragement, however, carefully avoided any suggestion that Peking has strengthened its commitment to assist the DRV.

3. Chou En-lai's speech at the Front reception in Peking on 20 December included a renewed attack on those who were giving only "sham assistance" to the Vietnamese while actually supporting the "imperialist plot of peace talks" and seeking to make a "dirty deal with the US." His statement implied that the Soviet efforts to expand their influence in Hanoi are meeting with some success and betrays mounting Chinese alarm over the possibility that Moscow might be able to call the tune at some point in the future.

4. Chou underscored Peking's earlier warnings against being taken in by US "tricks"--such as a pause in the bombing and offers of unconditional talks--and exhorted the Vietnamese to hold fast to Pham Van Dong's "four propositions" and the five-point statement by the Front last March. He asserted that because the US is refusing to accept these "reasonable proposals" the only course is to fight on.

DRV-Soviet Relations

5. DRV politburo member Le Thanh Nghi signed an aid agreement with Soviet officials on 21 December in which the USSR extended supplementary technical assistance, additional "free economic aid" in 1966, and a credit to balance the clearing account for 1965. The Soviet pledges appeared more generous than the loan agreement for 1966 signed by Nghi with the Chinese two weeks ago. Earlier this year, however, it was the Chinese who extended "gratuitous assistance" to the DRV, while the Soviets offered economic and defense assistance but did not mention "free aid."

6. The Soviets used the ceremonies surrounding the aid agreement to pledge continued support for the DRV in the "military, economic, and political spheres." Nghi will stop in North Korea before returning to Hanoi. In Pyongyang, he will probably receive pledges of moral support and possibly some offer of assistance within the limited capabilities of the North Koreans.

Negotiations

7. On 18 December a Hanoi commentary denounced US statements on the Fanfani - La Pira peace initiative as "groundless fabrications," designed to cover further US escalation of the war. La Pira himself was chastised by Hanoi for misinterpreting what he had been told by the North Vietnamese during his talks with them in early November. The wording of the DRV commentary suggested that the North Vietnamese were genuinely surprised by the uproar over their conversations with La Pira. The commentary attempted to make clear that Ho and Pham Van Dong had talked to La Pira at the latter's request, and that the DRV position on the war had been restated in standard terms. The Vietnamese also attempted to make clear that the Italian had been officially received only by the Vietnam Fatherland Front and not by the DRV Government.

8. In private conversations, however, Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin tried to give the impression that Hanoi was not totally disinterested in negotiations. He told Ambassador Harriman that a cessation of US bombings of North Vietnam "for a long enough period" might lead to discussions of a peaceful settlement. Dobrynin would not explain what led the Soviets to believe that Hanoi would adopt a more conciliatory attitude in the event the US attacks ceased. He implied that Moscow would encourage the North Vietnamese in this direction, but avoided any claims that Soviet encouragement would in fact have any appreciable influence on Hanoi's decision.

III. THIRD COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

A. ICRC

The GVN released a statement to the press on 19 December stating that they had decided to give a list of their Viet Cong prisoners of war to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Vietnam, and would allow ICRC representatives to visit these prisoners. The GVN also announced their intention to release some North Vietnamese Army prisoners because of the Christmas and New Year holidays. The prisoners who are released would be allowed to choose between remaining in South Vietnam or repatriation to the North.

B. ICC

The senior political adviser to the Canadian ICC delegation reported to our embassy in Saigon that ICC investigations of North Vietnamese violations of the Geneva accords are stalled again. ICC Commissioner Rhaman stated at last week's meeting that the Indians need further time to consider the interrogations of seven PAVN infiltrators from the 325th Division before deciding whether to accept this as evidence. However, the Indians are already claiming that interrogations of three prisoners were conducted in an improper manner. The Poles continue to refuse to join in the interrogation teams. The Indian delegation (one adviser of which is an amateur chemist) also insists that it cannot accept the validity of documents found at Vung Ro bay until similar documents are immersed for a similar length of time under water. (Destruction of a 120-foot North Vietnamese vessel on 16 February 1965 led to a large haul of weapons and documents that provided evidence of North Vietnam's involvement in the South Vietnam insurgency.) Such documents must be obtained in North Vietnam and the ICC is therefore writing to ask Hanoi to provide them, though there is little prospect that the DRV will comply. The investigation of the documents has been continuing for almost a year.

C. AUSTRALIA

The Australian cabinet has decided not to discuss augmentation of Australian combat forces in Vietnam

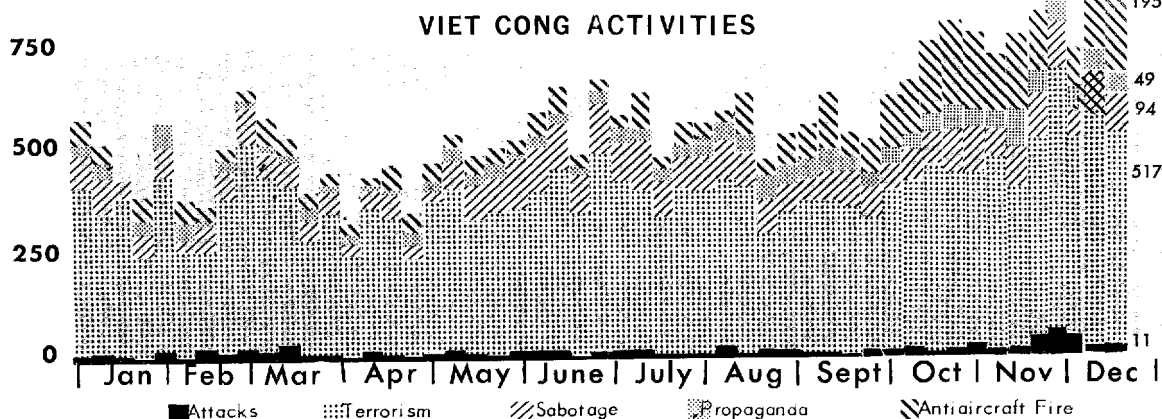
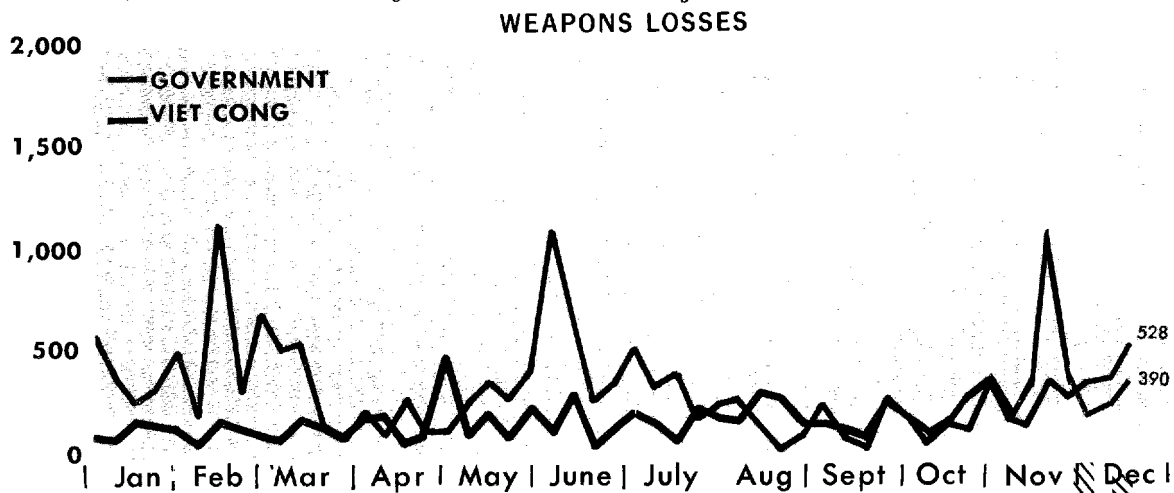
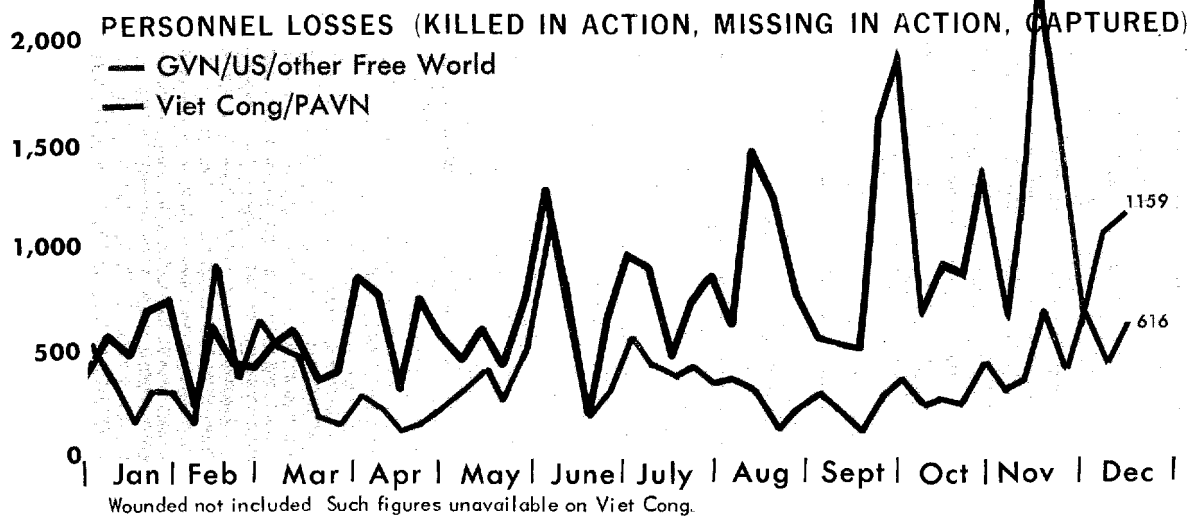
until at least mid-January 1966. The deferral is related to the government's desire to review its commitments in Malaysia and Africa as well as Vietnam, and to domestic political considerations, including the overseas use of draftees. The review may not change the government's basic intention to increase its commitment in Vietnam, but it will delay a firm decision until late January or February, and the arrival of additional troops until possibly May or June.

SOUTH VIETNAM BATTLE STATISTICS, 1965

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WEEKLY REPORT

11-18 DECEMBER

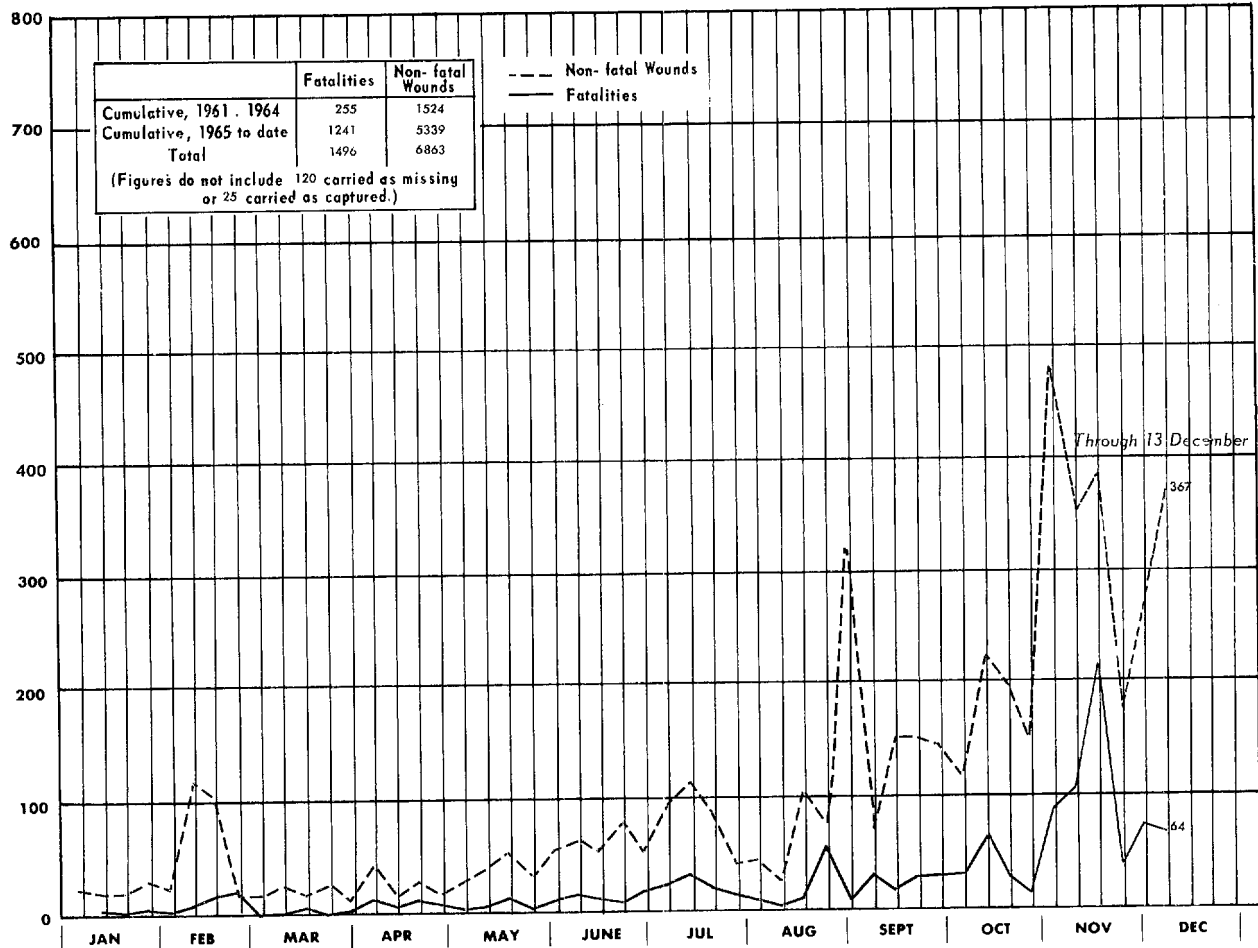


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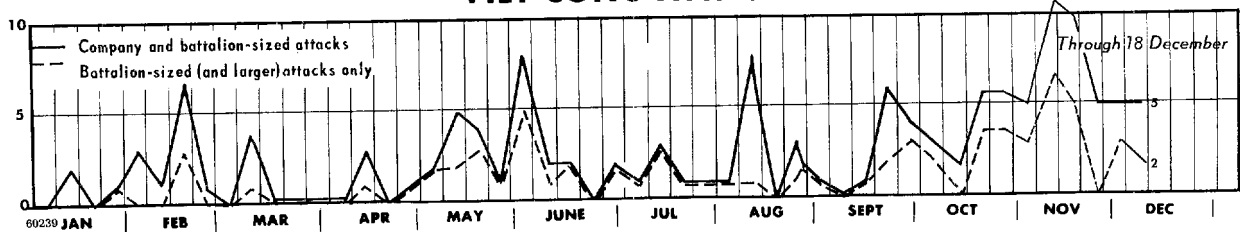
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US COMBAT CASUALTIES IN VIETNAM INCLUDING NORTH VIETNAM



VIET CONG ATTACKS



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NO FOREIGN DISSEM

NO FOREIGN DISSEM
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